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Annual Travel Issue

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for Every Budget

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The featured topics of this issue is Travel to Japan. Traditional and contemporary culture, natural blessings and exciting food scenes—a lot of things to see and experience await you.

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ANNUAL TRAVEL ISSUE

In this travel issue, Chopsticks NY approaches Japan from three different angles. First, we'll introduce three stories attached to tourist destinations; Second, lodging options; and finally tasty souvenirs from all 47 prefectures.

Destinations Depicted in Japan's Major Literary Works

You probably have a list of things you want to do when you travel to Japan: eating ramen, bathing in onsen, visiting the Ghibli Museum, shopping in Harajuku, trying out the monk experience at a temple, and more. But how about having a little context for your trip? Here we introduce internationally known Japanese literary works set in real places. We picked three books that have English translations—you can read the books before you leave or bring them on your trip.

Izu in Shizuoka Prefecture

Izu no Odoriko (The Izu Dancer, The Dancing Girl of Izu), 1926

With its many onsen (hot springs), beautiful nature, and mild climate, the *Izu Peninsula* in Shizuoka Prefecture has been a popular tourist destination for centuries. The peninsula has been the setting for numerous stories, but perhaps the most famous internationally is *The Izu Dancer* (also known as *The Dancing Girl of Izu*), a short story by Nobel laureate, Yasunari Kawabata.

The protagonist of the story is a young student in Tokyo who travels to Izu to escape his depression and loneliness. He meets a girl who is part of a traveling performance troupe and is attracted by her purity and brightness. His mind gradually becomes clearer, and he regains the strength to deal with his situation back in Tokyo as he travels through the Izu onsen towns of **Shizuoka**, **Yuguchi**, **Amegigoto**, **Yuguchi**, and **Shimada** along with the troupe. (These onsen towns are still very popular among Japanese travelers.)

This coming-of-age story is autobiographical. Kawabata had traveled to Izu when he was a student in Tokyo, and his experiences inspired him to write the story years later. Even after he became a successful writer, he loved Izu and visited frequently, often staying there to work. He wrote *The Dancing Girl of Izu* in a ryokan (Japanese traditional inn) in Yuguchi called Fukusaya. This ryokan still exists and welcomes guests. It has also hosted many movie stars when they shot movie versions of *The Dancing Girl of Izu*, and now it displays stills and behind-the-scenes pictures. It also offers the opportunity to dress up like a dancing girl for a cosplay experience.



Shizuoka Onsen is also a historical town in which Shizuoka-temple with 1000 years of history is located.



Two protagonists fell in love with each other there, and in the end, a part of Izu made an onsen town.

Matsuyama Ehime Prefecture Boschan (Botchan), 1906

Saseki Natsume, who studied in London from 1890 to 1901, is truly a legendary writer from the dawn of Japan's modern era. Many of his novels are translated into English, including *Botchan*. Botchan is the nickname of the protagonist, who was sent to teach math at a middle school in the Shikoku region right after graduating from college in Tokyo. With a straightforward yet mischievous personality, Botchan spends one eventful month in the school on beautiful Shikoku island, far away from home. Saseki vividly and humorously depicts Botchan's interactions with fellow teachers and students.

In the book, the exact location of the middle school isn't specified, but most people think it must be **Matsuyama** in Ehime Prefecture, where Saseki himself worked as a middle school English teacher after graduating from college in 1895. In a sense, he

himself was a visitor to the place and could describe the experience as seen with fresh eyes. It is said that he wrote the novella in only ten days. Saseki loved **Dogo Onsen**, hot springs with an infamous ryokan in Matsuyama that appear in the book (Botchan swims in the bath here). The ryokan is still in operation and is popular with visitors from all over the world. It is also believed to be the inspiration for the setting of Hayao Miyazaki's anime film *Spirited Away* (2001).

In Matsuyama, you can see the sweet match drawers, now called Botchan dango, that Saseki enjoyed and ride a sightseeing train, the Botchan Reskko, to look around the city. Matsuyama is also the birthplace of Shiga Naoya, the father of modern haiku poetry and a friend of Saseki.



Dogo Onsen Ryokan is a highlight of Botchan-the real sightseeing.

Kyoto and Uji in Kyoto Prefecture Kobe in Hyogo Prefecture *Genji Monogatari* (The Tale of Genji), eleventh century

The *Tale of Genji* is the oldest Japanese novel, and it is written by nobleswoman Murasaki Shikibu. This epic love story about Prince Hikaru Genji consists of 54 chapters in three parts that depict his relationship with multiple women and his political life. Long before the Taian were muddled up with police and love in England, according to the novel, Japan had similar palace intrigues. The *Tale of Genji* is fiction, but it was written by a lady-in-waiting in the court, and it is easy to assume that many episodes in the book are based on actual incidents.

Since the events of *The Tale of Genji* took place more than a thousand years ago, the Heian Palace is long gone, but memorial plaques and monuments stand at the site, which is now a residential area. To show the spots where each of the chambers were located, the **Kyoto Gasho (Kyoto Imperial Palace)**, which is the former palace of the Emperor, was modeled after the Heian Palace. It is open to the public so you can envision the setting for *Genji*. There are maps available there with all the *Genji*-related spots, and you can see 40 monuments and inscriptions. You can check out the *Genji* points of interest and obtain a map here:

www.city.kyoto.lg.jp/bunshi/page/0030038614.

How! (Japanese only)

The **Same Word** of Kobe in Hyogo Prefecture is the backdrop for the second part of the *Genji*. *Genji* was exiled from Kyoto to Sano because of his adultery with the then-Emperor's mistress. Sano was not as exciting as Kyoto for *Genji*, but he had a relaxing time there and enjoyed the beautiful ocean views.

Uji, outside Kyoto, is the setting for the last part of *Genji*. *Genji* dies here, and his descendants then become the main characters in the novel. **Uji Byodo-in**, a villa representative of those owned by noble families during *Genji*'s time, was owned by one of the real-life models for *Genji*. The beautiful and luxurious Uji Byodo-in is now open to the public. In Uji, you cannot miss the **Uji City Genji Monogatari Museum**. The exhibition is comprehensive as well as entertaining, allowing visitors to understand the story of *Uji Jiji* (the third part of *The Tale of Genji*).

Since *The Tale of Genji* is so long and overwhelming, you might hesitate to read it. In that case, you might want to try *Asaka Ukiyomori* (1990-1993), a series of otoko nange (guys') comic books adapted by Waki Yamato.



The structure of the current Kyoto Imperial Palace was modeled after the Heian Palace, the setting of *The Tale of Genji*.



Visitors to the Uji City Genji Monogatari Museum can enjoy the only display that depicts the world of the ancient aristocratic-level story.



From Traditional Inns to Innovative Hotels

Lodging Options in Japan for Every Budget

With a unique culture blending traditional and contemporary aspects, exciting food offerings, and fast and convenient transportation systems, Japan is one of the most attractive tourist destinations in the world. Japan has experienced a rapid growth of tourism in the past decade, and as the number of foreign visitors to Japan increases, the country's hotel business evolves. Today there are a variety of lodging options that can accommodate every need depending on the style of travel, budget, and purpose. Here we introduce different types of lodging options so you can choose one for your next trip to Japan.

Feel at Home at a Traditional Ryokan (Japanese Inn)

If you want to experience traditional Japanese *omotenashi* (hospitality) while staying at a hotel, choose a ryokan for your lodging. Defined as a traditional Japanese-style inn, ryokans are usually equipped with tatami mat rooms, communal baths, and public areas that visitors can savor for entertainment. There are several types of ryokan that are different in size, price range, location, and atmosphere.

Luxurious resort hotel ryokans tend to be located either ocean or mountain side and offer great views. They are designed to feature locally sourced materials and decorated with local crafts. Breakfast and dinner are usually included and served in one's room, and are prepared by using local delicacies and fresh, seasonal harvests from the region. Ryokans in Kyoto are not always surrounded by nature, but have historical settings. They are often equipped with Japanese-style zen gardens, giving you a place to connect with nature, and serve elegant Kyoto-style kaiseki dishes. Whenever a *kura-machi-ryokan* is located, guests are treated with sincere hospitality and feel at home in a completely different environment from their home. In essence, this type of ryokan is not a simple lodging but a destination hotel in which guests can enjoy amenities and entertainment without leaving the premises.

Onsen (hot spring) towns commonly have ryokans, although they are not necessarily always luxurious or upscale. However, the onsen town itself is like a theme park for tourists. When shopping, sightseeing and even public bath hopping, guests at ryokans can stroll around towns in the yukata (cotton kimono provided as a bathrobe). Some of the ryokans in onsen towns might not have traditional Japanese rooms, but again it is the onsen town itself that offers a unique atmosphere allowing visitors to immerse themselves in Japan's good old days.

Another variation of ryokans is the *minshuku*. Much smaller in scale and often family-operated, *minshuku* offer family-style *omotenashi* and service. Meals are not always gorgeous *kaiseki*-style, but are full of seasonal and local delicacies. Guests can experience a more everyday Japanese way of life at *minshuku*, and they are less expensive than ryokans.

Some ryokans boast magnificent views, some are famous for *kaiseki*-style food, and some offer amenities such as century-old architecture, intricate interior designs, upscale gardens, and a friendly atmosphere in communal spaces that allows guests to mingle with each other. Finally, it is important to know that there is no specific rule for naming ryokans, meaning there is no clear distinction between ryokans and hotels. Some of the ryokan-style lodges put "hotel" in the name to make it sound more contemporary. On the other hand, some boutique hotels put "ryokan" even though they are only partially ryokan-style accommodations. So don't be fooled by ryokan names and make sure to look into the services and facilities of the accommodation to find what you are looking for.

Contemporary Luxurious Hotels and City Hotels

While ryokans showcase Japan's traditional sides, city hotels offer its contemporary side. Luxurious city hotels, usually multiple floors high, are equipped with modern-like modern decors, panoramic city views from the top floors, upscale restaurants and bars, and multi-language services that allow you to experience

a Western-style stay with Japanese twists. These hotels are accessible from hub stations and shopping malls, and are often connected to them by underground pathways. Like with luxurious ryokans, you can enjoy your stay without going outside (but of course it is a completely different experience from that of a ryokan). You can easily immerse yourself in the unique atmosphere, and probably get lost just like Scarlett Johansson did in the film *Lost in Translation*.

Luxurious city hotels might not be affordable for everyone, so there are more wallet-friendly city hotels. They are not as fancy as luxurious hotels, but they are located in places accessible to subways and train stations and have convenient amenities and multi-language services. They might not be destination hotels, but are comfortable enough if the purpose of your visit is sightseeing.

Affordable and Convenient Business Hotels

Perhaps the most popular type of lodging among foreign travelers right now is business hotels, because of their price range and convenience. Business hotels were originally created to accommodate busy Japanese business people who travel nationwide and only need a place to sleep and ease the day's fatigue. Business hotels have minimal service with no luxurious amenities, but are accessible from stations, affordably priced and usually equipped with business services like fax, copy, LAN, and Wi-Fi services. They also serve buffet style Japanese breakfast starting early in the morning.

Although they are not fancy, business hotels are perfect for overseas budget travelers who want to spend the majority of their time going out to explore the places they visit. Business hotels do not provide 24-hour room service, but they are usually close to convenience stores which operate 24/7. The cheapest rooms do not have bathing facilities, but in that case they might allow use of a sento (public bath) located inside the hotel. As the number of non-Japanese travelers who use business hotels grows, many business hotels are preparing by employing multilingual staff and providing tourist maps and guidebooks.

Unique, Innovative, Budget-Friendly Lodgings

For those with super tight budgets, there are still some options. Japan also has the youth hostel system popular among backpackers in Europe. Here you will need to share a room, but one of the fun parts of staying at youth hostels is the chance to mingle with strangers. Youth hostels and dormitory-style hotels are currently growing in popularity. They are a type of conceptual hotel, meaning each one has an individual concept such as art, organic or traditional. This new style of hotels is particularly popular among foreign tourists. Since they are smaller-scale hotels, they do not always have multi-language services, but adventurists/guests can meet people from other cultures and communicate in English or another common language. Some hotels are more like a shared house, having kitchens where guests can cook together.

Another option for adventurous, budget travelers are capsule hotels. Here guests stay in small, pod-like spaces the size of a long-size bed. It looks like a beehive and is futuristic. Guests share bath and shower rooms and the gantry. Since it's unique and budget-friendly, this type of hotel is increasingly popular among millennials. If you need to stay somewhere for weeks or months, a weekly mansion might be your best option. This is an apartment-style lodging option where you can book rooms by the week. There is no hotel-like service but you can stay there as if you lived there, and it is much cheaper.



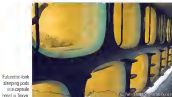
Ryokan in onsen towns are equipped with indoor and outdoor onsen with great views. Unwind in milky spring water and beautiful air from the forest in Niyata Onsen in Akita Prefecture.



Tancho Baku Yachiu Hansi, located in the old samurai town in Kakunodate, Akita Prefecture, features retro interior designs and decor that blends well in the old town atmosphere.



Hot-wagon beef and vegetable tempura, grilled fish—Local seasonal delicacies are featured in dinner at mizutoku in Osaka.



Future-like sleeping pods in a capsule hotel in Tokyo.

47 Souvenirs from All 47 Prefectures!

By Wendy T. Harrison

We spend a lot of time around the office researching, testing and [after a trip] gifting *omiyage* (souvenirs). So it seemed natural we'd make our own ultimate list of premium presents across Japan. Some are unique, and some are familiar—and all are great gifts from their respective prefectures!



<https://japantravel.com/en/articles/2015>

Hokkaido & Tohoku

Tohoku, the north-easternmost part of Honshu, the largest island of Japan, is made up of six prefectures: Akita, Aomori, Fukushima, Iwate, Miyagi and Yamagata. Not wanting to isolate Hokkaido (though it's easy to write solely about delicious Hokkaido treats), we've included it in this list.

Hokkaido – Shiroi Koibito

Shiroi Koibito is an immensely popular sweet in Hokkaido that can be found just about anywhere on the island. A simple but rich snack, it is the marriage of two languages that cookies, *biscuits* together by white chocolate in buttery bliss. People across the nation know about this Sapporo specialty, so don't forget to bring a box or two if you visit a friend from another prefecture. - www.shiroi.co.jp

Aomori – Ki ni Naru Ringo Pie

Each region of Japan takes pride in a particular culinary specialty and in Aomori the apple reigns supreme. And what's a better way to showcase your special food than by serving it whole? Even better, you can eat the entire



apple without worrying about pesky seeds. Ki ni Naru Ringo Pie ("You'll Love It Apple Pie") is a candy Aomori apple, sweetened with syrup and then encased in a flaky pie crust. It's said to taste better served warm like a real apple pie, but we'll take it any way we can get it! - trip101.com

Iwate – Kinman

Kinman (golden brand) are delightful little bites of custard, a type of Japanese sponge cake (*avai*, by way of Portuguese traders, but that's a long story). There's a distinct surprise inside these Akita treats: they're filled with a sweet white bean paste instead of the standard red bean paste connoisseurs of Japanese sweets typically expect.

Iwate – Kamome no Tamago

Kamome no Tamago, or seagull's eggs are sweets similar to Akita Prefecture's Kinman above. However, these egg-shaped cakes are filled with a smooth white bean paste and then coated in a soft white chocolate shell. If you make the trip to Iwate, you'll want to come back with these in hand. - www.sakusaka.co.jp/Japanese/

Miyagi – Zunda Mochi & Hagi no Tsuki

Zunda Mochi may not look especially appealing, but

those living in Miyagi are very partial to it. Young soybeans are sweetened and mashed into a kind of edamame paste, then wrapped around a typical mochi rice cake. It's a great gift for someone interested in traditional Japanese sweets. If that doesn't sound tempting, we also recommend Hagi no Tsuki (pictured right), a very popular and generally more palatable choice for non-locals.

- www.sando.co.jp

Yamagata – Sakurambo Kirara

People from Yamagata will be happy to tell you that their prefecture and cherries are an inseparable combination, and Sakurambo Kirara is one way of representing that ideal. This adorable jelly houses an arbutus cherry in the middle. The smooth, jelly-like texture, combined with the refreshing taste of a real cherry, is a great summertime pick-me-up. - www.sakura.co.jp/Japanese/

Fukushima – Momador

The name Momador might be strange if your native tongue is Spanish. Literally meaning "people who drink mother's milk," Momador have a sweet, milky bean paste filling. They may resemble Twinkies, but they definitely pack a lot more flavor. - www.sanninmogu.co.jp/Japanese/

Kanto

The Kanto area is home to Tokyo and six other prefectures: Gunma, Tochigi, Ibaraki, Saitama, Chiba and Kanagawa. This region isn't particularly large, but contains one-third of the entire population of Japan.

Gunma – Cheese no Mizosuke

Mizosuke describes an dish that's been pickled in miso. And in this case, the rice we're talking about is cheese.

The specialty of Gunma Prefecture actually begins in Hokkaido: the source of the fresh, raw milk used to make the cheese. The cheese is then soaked in miso over a period of six months or more, slowly and carefully aging the cheese to create its signature taste. - www.tanawaya.com/Japanese/

Tochigi – Reito Nama Gyozo

Tochigi's quite famous for gyoza (pan-fried dumplings) and if you question the locals, some might

tell you that the best dumplings in Japan are made at Min Min restaurant. These are always long lines.



All About Wendy T. Harrison

Actor, director and writer calling Japan home for the past seven years. Loves all the things and all things. First favorite: Hobbes (sketch drawing, gyo, and cooking but not simultaneously).

queuing for a pack of their frozen gyōza, so be prepared to wait. In fact, however, it then takes the wind out of your sails, you can order them here and save yourself the trip.

- www.tripadvisor.co.uk

Ibaraki – Yoshiwara Denshu

Made from lightly sweetened glutinous mochi rice and topped with golden kanako (crusted soybean powder), Yoshiwara Denshu is a snack that doesn't rely on extra preservatives to attract fans. Made by hand by skilled craftsppeople, it's beloved the simple ingredients (beans, sugar, starch syrup and water) have remained the same since the Edo Period (1603-1868). Furthermore, no dairy products or eggs are used in the recipe, making it a safe choice for vegan friends.

- www.yoshiwara-denju.com (Japanese)

Saitama – Imokoi

Chubu

Chubu, the central region in Japan's main island of Honshu, is comprised of nine prefectures: Aichi, Fukui, Gifu, Ishikawa, Nagano, Niigata, Shizuoka, Toyama and Yamanashi. The region also lays claim to Mount Fuji, Japan's highest and most famous mountain.

Niigata – Kukurui Daiginjo Sake

It's widely believed in Niigata Prefecture that the best sake in the world comes from their snowy lands. This very snow provides the region with clean, naturally distilled water that lends its purity to the flavor of sake. Aokishuzo has been producing Japanese sake for almost 300 years, and its Kukurui Daiginjo (daiginjo being a designation of premium quality) is "aromatic, slightly floral, full-bodied [with] hints of pear & apple." Whether in winter or spring, this is certainly one refreshing way to warm your heart. If you need a refresher course in sake terminology, we're happy to help!

- www.kukurui.co.jp

Shizuoka – Unagi Pse

This Shizuoka specialty isn't so much a pie as it is a craggy cookie. The secret ingredient is a powder made from eel (unagi) bones which is kneaded into the dough. Instead of a fishy taste, your first bite should be surprisingly sweet and buttery. Eel is regarded as a stamina food in Japan, and this snack is a great way to recharge during those long, hot Shizuoka summers.

- www.shanku.co.jp

Yamanashi – Shingen Momo

Yamanashi Prefecture may be the home of Mount Fuji, but it's also quite famous for an abundance of delicious fruit. People travel long distances to pick

Shansen's Inukia is a specialty snack of the region, but can also be found in Kyoto, where it is known as Inukia Dango. Inukia means potato and Inu means love, and after one bite into this tasty treat that name should make sense! A thick and generous slice of sweet potato is covered with unseasoned red bean paste, which gives it a very textured and complex feel in the mouth.

- umebonanza.blogspot.jp

Tokyo – Tokyo Banana

While bananas aren't necessarily the main crop of Tokyo, Tokyo Banana is definitely the most iconic of confectionery snacks offered in the capital city. There are even special stores in Tokyo Station that bake the custom-tailored confections and sell them straight from the oven. They also come in funny patterns and flavors that change over time to give them a little variety.

- allabout-japan.com

fresh fruit from Yamanashi orchards, and one of the region's specialties is its peaches, or momo. Shingen Momo puts a local twist on the time-tested mochi, a sweet, traditional Japanese cake (by way of China) usually filled with sweet red bean paste. The Shingen Momo is filled with white bean paste and peachy peach jelly, which should be decadent enough to entice any mochi purist out there.

- www.wikiotrya.co.jp (Japanese)

Nagano – Kuri Kanoko

Kuri Kanoko (roast chestnut) is an inventive dessert from Nagano sure to warm your heart in the cold, snowy winters. Sweetened whole chestnuts surround a jam made with agar, a gelatin-like substance popular in Asian desserts, with the final product often arranged in adorable shapes or rounds. The true chestnut lover cannot resist such a delectable gift!

- www.dtsdo.com

Toyama – Tsuki Sehai

Toyama Sehai, which translates as Moon World, is an out-of-this-world treat from a Toyama Prefecture confectioner that's over 100 years old. Made out of molasses, eggs, white sugar and wasabito, a traditional light gold Japanese sugar, this heavenly cake simply melts in your mouth. You can snack on it as is, but we recommend pairing it with a nice hot cup of green tea or coffee.

- www.kakaku.co.jp (Japanese)

Ishikawa – Wari Gori

Wari Gori may look like rock candy, but that's where the similarity ends. Made by drying agar for six days, this confection from Ishikawa Prefecture is much softer than candy. Its refreshing and subtle flavor is a treat and

Kanagawa – Hato Sabure

People "lick" to Kanagawa just to get their hands on these Hato Sabure. "Hato" means "pigeon", and as you can guess, this is a bird-shaped buttery cookie that's famous nationwide. Tashimaya the company that produces the best-known version, has been making them for over 100 years, so you know they must be good!

- www.hato.co.jp (Japanese)

Chiba – Yachi Peanuts

While you can find peanuts in any grocery store, the Yachi Peanuts of Chiba have an incredible story behind them. The peanut industry helped the region recuperate after World War II, and now 80 percent of peanuts in Japan come from the prefecture. So you're not only buying a snack, you're buying a piece of history and a story of resilience.

- www.tokyoweekender.com

true way to beat the heat in the summertime

- shop.wagata-mokuren.com (Japanese)

Gifu – Mizu Manju

Mizu Manju (water bun) may look like a drop of water frozen in time, but this special oniyagyo from Gifu Prefecture gets its watery appearance thanks to a starch made from the root of the kudzu (arrowroot) plant. A seasonal treat usually enjoyed in summer, the makers of Mizu Manju take pride in using fresh, cold groundwater in production. Several flavors can be found, from traditional ones like red bean and green tea to seasonal fruit jelly-filled varieties.

- allabout-japan.com

Fukuoka – Habutae Mochi

Habutae Mochi, a specialty of Fukuoka Prefecture, gets its name from Habutae silk, a traditional product in the area. Made from rice flour combined with sugar and starch syrup, then steamed, it's a thin and silky rice cake that really resembles its namesake. The translucent paste that forms the base of this treat takes a long time to make, which adds to its elegance.

- www.att-japan.net

Aichi – Uiro

Uiro is made from rice-glutinous rice just like mochi (commonly translated as "rice cake"), but this Aichi specialty is also made with sugar and carefully steamed, creating a smooth texture and mouthfeel. The dessert is also well known for its wide range of colors, indicative of the various flavors available. These flavors include the usual suspects, such as matcha green tea and sweet red beans, as well as seasonal delights like cherry blossoms and yuzu (Japanese citrus).

- www.aichi-fair.go.jp

Kansai

Kansai lies in the south-central region of Japan's main island. The region includes the popular destinations Osaka and Kyoto, as well as the prefectures of Mie, Nara, Wakayama, Hyogo and Shiga.

Mie – Akafuku



Mie Prefecture is the bread home of Akafuku, whose shape reflects the region's Izu River. This traditional and simple sweet is made from mochi (pounded, gelatinous rice) and sweet red bean paste. It's known for hundreds of years as a popular treat for pilgrims making the trek to the sacred Ina Grand Shrine.

• www.akafuku.co.jp

Nara – Shika no Fun

Nara is incredibly famous for its shika (deer), which roam around parks and shrines (or wherever they feel like going) waiting for visitors to feed them their special confection, called shika senbei. As a result, deer droppings can be found all over the city. Who would've imagined that they'd be the inspiration for one of Nara's most popular presents: Shika no Fun, or "Deer Poop"! These chocolate delights, very sim-

ilar to Peanut M&M's, not only provide the recipient with a good laugh, but offer a fun snack that makes an excellent ice cream topper. Really!

• globalnikuten.com

Wakayama – Nanke Plum

Line plums are beloved throughout the nation, and incredibly versatile as well. They can be added to almost any meal in sweet and sour varieties. And even Wakayama Prefecture produces some of Japan's top plums, it makes sense that we would choose a plum-based representative of the prefecture. Among the various types of ume produced in the area, the Nanka Plum is most popular. These plums from Wakayama usually go on to become sour umeboshi (whole pickled plums) or sweet umeshu.

• japan-brand-pits.go.jp

Kyoto – Yatsuhashi

Yatsuhashi are incredibly famous souvenirs throughout the country, and are treasured by both overseas visitors and Japanese people alike. Typically displayed to show off their unique triangular shape, Yatsuhashi are carefully made with a thin paper-like layer of glutinous rice flour, sweetened with sugar, then filled with a red bean paste. Kyoto's onsenjo shops are known to boast a wide variety of other flavors and seasonal versions, like cherry blossom filling, which always complement their slight cinnamon flavor.

• globalnikuten.com

Osaka – Daifuku

Daifuku are small, round mochi rice cakes dusted in

confectioner's sugar, which are available virtually everywhere in Japan. So if you're not really keen on the octopus-flavored snacks popular in Osaka, you can always turn to Daifuku. There are many different varieties, including those with festive white, green or pink mochi, as well as versions filled with anko (red bean paste) or fruit—such as strawberries!

• www.tajidai.com

Hyogo – Kobe Purin

Kobe may be better known for its beef, but if you're looking for a product that's a bit easier to bring home to loved ones, look no further than Kobe Purin. Purin, which is the local approximation of the English word pudding, is specifically a flan, or crème caramel, a gelatinous custard pudding with a layer of caramel syrup on top. While this kid-favorite dessert can be found in supermarkets all over the country, the Kobe version has a light, citrus-liqueur flavor that's more suitable for adult taste buds.

• aboutjapanweblog.jp

Shiga – Itokiri Mochi

Neighboring Kyoto, Shiga Prefecture rests on the eastern edge of Lake Biwa, Japan's largest lake, which drives quite a bit of tourism. And these tourists find themselves seeking an Itokiri Mochi, a Japanese sweet made of pounded mochi rice and a sweet red bean filling. They're sold at souvenir shops around the popular Toga-Tanaka Shrine, so you should definitely enjoy both while in the area.

• www.itokirimochi.co.jp (Japanese)

Chugoku

Chugoku is the westernmost region of Honshu, consisting of the prefectures of Hiroshima, Okayama, Shimane, Tottori and Yamaguchi.

Okayama – Kibidango

If you're a fan of Momotaro, the legendary hero of Okayama Prefecture, then you must be familiar with his favorite snack, Kibidango. While not all versions use flour from the prize millet plant (bush in Japanese), these traditional and very popular treats always contain glutinous rice and sugar. The history of how they came about is also quite interesting, so be sure to read up below before you make a pilgrimage to Okayama.

Read full story on wikipedia.org

Tottori – Suna Tamago

One of the most unique presents on this list, Suna Tamago literally means "sand eggs." While some regions have eggs made in hot springs, Tottori is home to amazing bad (amazingly hard) sand dunes

that draw visitors each year. And it would be remiss of you to miss out on these chicken eggs, baked for about 25 minutes in the desert-like sands until the egg whites slightly brown and the yolks are cooked to a creamy perfection.

Shimane – Waka-kusa



Waka-kusa (which translates to "young grass") became popular in the Meiji Period (1868-1912) as a traditional confection of Matsue, the capital city of Shimane Prefecture. This rice cake is coated with rice powder and sugar in a very vibrant and unique green color that pays tribute to springs all green—without tasting anything like them.

• www.simeko.co.jp (Japanese)

Hiroshima – Mamiiji Manju

Mamiiji Manju are possibly one of the best-known

souvenirs across Japan. These sweets are patterned after Japanese maple (momiji leaf), and if you make your way to Itsukushima Shrine, you can watch the so-called castella cakes being made by special machines. You may simply not eat them when it comes to freshness. Even better, these tasty treats come in a variety of fillings such as sweet red bean paste, cheese, custard and chocolate.

• about-japan.com

Yamaguchi – Tsukuri de Hirotsu Tamago

You don't have to go into outer space to find a treat of galactic proportions! Yamaguchi Prefecture has got you covered with its specialty, Tsukuri de Hirotsu Tamago ("Eggs Found on the Moon"). Potatoes of choice provide a nice counterpart to the smooth cream filling inside this sweet little cake. If you're interested in touring the factory where they're made, this link will prove helpful!

• www.kansaku.co.jp (Japanese)

Shikoku

Shikoku, hanging out between the coasts of Kyushu, Chugoku and Kansai, is the smallest of Japan's main islands, and home to four prefectures: Ehime, Kagawa, Kochi and Tokushima.

Ehime – Tort

While you'd be forgiven if you expected this to be a pe-like crusty treat, Tort, as it refers to the Ehime onigayo, is actually a roll cake that's filled with red bean paste with a citrus twist. Depending on the season, you might be able to find a few extra twists on this roll cake, including chestnut or cherry blossom flavored.

• gisa.jp

Kyushu & Okinawa

Kyushu, the south-westernmost of Japan's main islands, is home to seven prefectures: Fukuoka, Kumamoto, Nagasaki, Oita, Saga, Kagoshima and Miyazaki. We've added Okinawa to this list, but as the island chain has a flavor all of its own, you really should check out its Top 3 souvenir selections as well.

Fukuoka – Hyoko

Shigeru Ishizaka, looking for an innovative new snack, created this three-dimensional baby duck and named it Hyoko. The smooth filling of pea beans and fresh eggs complements the slightly savory exterior so well that the original recipe has remained unchanged to this day. This is the last-choice souvenir for anyone visiting Fukuoka.

• www.hyoko.co.jp

Kumamoto – Mushiwa Gwashi

Kumamoto Castle was an extremely well-fortified castle, and the mushi gashi (jellymer repelling) stone walls that protected it were the inspiration for this regional specialty. The red bean filling uses peeled beans, which puts more emphasis on its sweetness, while the incredibly flaky exterior is made of 100 layers of dough expertly prepared by hand. No wall is tall enough to stop us from getting to these goodies!

• item.rakuten.co.jp (Japanese)

Nagasaki – Castella

Castella is a Japanese sponge cake, based off a Portuguese bread first brought to Japan in the 16th century. This light cake is incredibly simple, made from flour, sugar, honey and eggs, but some specialty shops put their own spin on this classic. Bunnetsu is perhaps Nagasaki's most popular castella shop, and

Kagawa – Olive Oil

Shodoshima is an island located in the Seto Inland Sea. What makes this island unique is the fact that it was the first place in Japan olives were successfully grown. The olive is so synonymous with the island's identity that it was even designated as the official flower and tree of Kagawa Prefecture. Gifts from "Olive Island" made from olive oil are considered very popular and stylish goods.

• www.miy-kagawa.jp

Kochi – Kanzaashi

One of the most popular souvenirs from Kochi, roughly 45 million pieces of Kanzaashi are sold every year! This treat takes white bean paste mixed with yuzu strain and wraps it with machine cake dough

it can be found on a counter not far from the historic Dejima quarter. The shop has been around since 1900, but saw a spike in popularity in the 1990s thanks to a popular TV commercial featuring dancing and singing ladies named Kotatsu.

• www.tnpadviser.jp

Oita – Zabiezu



Zabiezu might be hard to say, but St. Francis Xavier is hardly unrecognizable. Having completed his missionary work in Japan on November 21, 1551, he departed from Oita Prefecture, and a statue of his new strands across from Oita-yoshi Park in Oita City. He also has a cake named after him. Zabiezu (the Japanese pronunciation of his name), which consists of a white, sweet bean paste or sweet bean paste with rare strain, all wrapped with a buttery biscuit dough.

• allabout-japan.com

Saga – Shiratama Manju

If you ask someone about the perfect souvenir from Saga Prefecture, it won't be a long story. Shiratama Manju, or steamed "white ball" rice bun, have been a local favorite for over 180 years. And the recipe, using non-glutinous rice, red beans, sugar and a touch of salt, hasn't changed since 1882.

• item.rakuten.co.jp (Japanese)

Kagoshima – Karukan

Our selection from Kagoshima Prefecture can be

And its appearance is a big selling point, as it resembles kanzashi, a traditional Japanese hair ornament. So ahead, let your hair down and enjoy this tasty little prize!

• www.hanako.com (Japanese)

Tokushima – Naruto Kintoki

Naruto Kintoki is a kind of golden sweet potato from Naruto City in Tokushima Prefecture that's used to make products from Japanese alcohol or desserts. In this confection, smooth potato cream delicately fills a soft cookies boat, providing a mildly sweet but elegant experience. While the potato has little to do with the popular anime *Naruto*, these sweet potato snacks we indeed known to disappear quickly!

• www.hinata-kintoki.co.jp (Japanese)

none other than Karukan, a portmanteau of the words "karu", meaning "light", and "yoku", a traditional Japanese confection usually sold in blocks. Made from long mountain yam finely shredded and combined with sugar and rice flour, Karukan normally look like slices of white bread. However, they're also made into a bun filled with a smooth red bean (anko) paste called Karukan Manju.

• www.sagabush.com

Miyazaki – Hyuga no Kaori Yokan

Hyagayatsu, thought to be a mutation of the Japanese citrus yuzu, is a regional specialty of Miyazaki Prefecture, and the base for Hyuga no Kaori Yokan (a traditional Japanese sweet with the fragrance of hyuga). This remarkable confection was created in 1913 using the juice, zest and pulp of the fruit to flavor yukan jelly, which is then poured back into the fruit's skin. After that, the entire outer skin is completely candied, making the whole thing edible. The hyagayatsu fruit itself may be a bit bitter, but this ingenious way of eating it is just one of many reasons to make the trip to Miyazaki.

• kyotohouse.com

Okinawa – Chinsuko

Found in practically every onigayo shop in Okinawa, Chinsuko are shortbread-like cookies made of flour, lard and sugar. Chinsuko were imported during the 15th century, when Okinawa was part of the Ryukyu Kingdom and trade with China and southern Asia was frequent. These buns came in several flavors, including vanilla, mango, chocolate, sweet potato, coconut and pineapple, guaranteeing something for everyone.

• allabout-japan.com

That's it. 47 onigayo from 47 prefectures! Now for the real question: How many have you tried?

The 16th Annual PASSPORT TO TAIWAN Festival

May 28 @ Union Square Park

Experience the Blend of Traditional and Modern, East and West.

Since 2002, the Taiwanese American community from the greater New York City area has gathered at Union Square Park in New York City to celebrate Taiwanese American Heritage Week. Called "Passport to Taiwan", this festival initially started as a gathering of the Taiwanese American diaspora in the tri-state region. As Taiwanese culture integrates into the mainstream, the festival has become an opportunity to share Taiwanese culture with fellow citizens and has grown into the largest outdoor celebration of Taiwanese culture in the U.S., drawing 40,000 visitors annually.



The festival has always sought to blend the Traditional and the Modern in the cultural programming, and to introduce traditionally underrepresented parts of Taiwanese culture to a broader audience.

Attendees find traditional foods like those found in the world-famous Taiwanese Night Markets, many of which are now part of the contemporary food lexicon, including Bubble Tea, Stinky Tofu, and Gao-Bao, or "Taiwanese Hamburger."

With its beautiful natural landscapes, rich history, modern lifestyle, ancient folk traditions, and an international food culture, Taiwan offers a worldly travel experience on one green island. Known for centuries as *Ilha Formosa*, today's Taiwan is a reflection of its history as a hub for the early Austronesian Peoples, as trading outposts for Portugal, Spain, and the Dutch, as a new frontier during the Ming and Qing Dynasties, as a colony of Japan, and as the current home of the Republic of China.

Owing to its history and cultural influences from its neighbors and from around the world, Taiwan is a culinary paradise. The best Shanghaiese soup dumplings in the world are made by Taiwan's own *Dia Tai Fung*. Classic Japanese cuisine is a minority, though recently Korean food has gained ground. Taiwan's night markets are

world renowned, offering an eclectic mix of exotic snacks.

Geographically, hills and high mountains make up almost 70% of Taiwan's land mass, with more than 200 peaks over 3,000 meters high. Taiwan's subtropical climate is home to a diverse ecosystem, with native plants accounting for about 40% of the total vegetation. Taiwan has been a longtime home to the world's longest bicycle manufacturers, and cycling has become a popular recreational activity, with many scenic cycling routes appearing all over the island. These routes range from the family-friendly to the world-class mountainous routes that reach 3,275 meters above sea level. A 5,000 km cycling route network linking the entire island is currently under development.

Taiwan Tourism Bureau will be at the 16th Annual Passport to Taiwan Festival to help plan your trip to Taiwan, and you could win round-trip tickets at the festival's fundraising raffle! Passport to Taiwan Festival will be held on Sunday, May 28th at the Union Square Park in New York City.

Event Highlights



Passport to Taiwan Festival at night! 40,000 visitors annually and is the largest outdoor celebration of Taiwanese culture in the U.S.



Taiwan has a dynamic and rich culinary culture. Fish balls are one Taiwanese spring roll-flop as a staple of Night Market foods at the festival.



Stage performances also exhibit a cultural mix. Dancers in Hakka style suits (pictured above) performed a modern fusion dance program last year.



During the Festival in year 2016, volunteers worked closely with the Japanese community and helped over 15,000 for the Kumamoto Earthquake relief.



Taiwan

THE HEART OF ASIA



taiwan.net.tw

Proud sponsor of 19th Passport to Taiwan Festival
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minutes. ④ After washing your face, apply the pack and
leave it for 10 minutes. ⑤ Rub your face with lukewarm
water and apply lotion afterwards.



Japanese Restaurant Review

Chisai Poke Bar
Suzuki
Mew Men

Mixology Lab

Sparkling Sake Spritzer
by Jessica Joly, Miss Sake USA 2016

Healthy, Hearty Cooking

Kale Okonomiyaki
Miso Soup with Kale

Listing

Japanese Restaurant

Chisai Poke Bar

568 Lewis Pl. (bet. Franklin & Canal Ave.) | Brooklyn, NY 11228
Tel: 718-396-2146 | www.chisaipokebar.com
Mon-Sat: 11:30 am-10pm

Poke, Hawaiian interpretation of Japanese chadoki-cushi (rawated fresh seafood over rice), is now taking New York by storm. But the boy poke restaurant in Crown Heights goes one step further: Chisai Poke Bar is partnering with Brooklyn-based fishmonger, Greenpoint Fish & Lobster Co. & Sea to Table, using fish sustainably caught on the Northeastern coast. Also, they serve poke in three styles: Bowl (as you see in other poke restaurant), Burrito wrapped in soy paper (Western take on Japanese Atsumori roll), and Cup for a small portion. Although styles are modern, the preparation methods are true to traditional Japanese cooking. Owner, William and chef, Joseph, are both from Portland, Maine, and William partnered with Chef Masahiko Miyake, Portland's Japanese cuisine master, before opening the restaurant. *Spicy Tuna Bowl* is made with Atlantic Albacore, cubed and marinated in shisoake miso dressing and kaniho kelp dashi marinated overnight, giving it enough umami to equalize with the spicy mayo. In addition to poke, they have a variety of buns that are still cooked with Japanese metalbusiness. The name of the restaurant comes from the Japanese adjective "chisai", meaning "small" or "tiny" in Japanese, and with only eight bar seats, it's literally tiny but with a lot of stories and flavors.



Spicy Tuna Bowl is served with an abundance of fresh eggs, miso. The cut is tiny into it like a salad.



The poke bowl in the *Spicy Tuna Bowl* is marinated in soy sauce and some of the best and the best taste with a soft and the most beautiful texture. This is a bowl of poke and you know people in New York (especially here).



Being in "tiny" but it concept and flavor on top enough to water you.

3 Best Sellers

- Spicy Tuna Bowl
- Pork Buns
- Chisai Bowl

\$11
\$8
\$11

Suzuki

100 W. 47th St., 2nd fl. (at 6th & 7th Ave.) New York, NY 10036
 Tel: 212/679-0808 | www.suzuki-diner.com
 Mon-Fri: 5:30-11:30 pm

NEW!



Restaurant Yuta Suzuki's new concept presents a trifecta of fine dining (Suzuki) omakase sushi (Satsuki), and high-end cocktails (Three Pillars), in a sprawling, underground space. Suzuki, in particular, is a bold step into the future — this modern, kaiseki-style, multi-course restaurant presents plate after plate of visually striking, flawlessly composed, and simply delicious food by Chef Takashi Yanai.

Yanai is a chef that will so-inspire even the most jaded New York City foodies. Exemplifying the use of fresh ingredients and nuanced cooking so closely associated with authentic Japanese cuisine, the \$158, 10-course menu dazzles the palate with dishes like the seasonal asahime (with fish flower in front Japan) to the individual Sukiyaki that lets you cook perfectly marbled beef that sensuously melts in your mouth. As the menu (which also offers a \$70 vegetarian option) changes monthly, diners will have more than ample reason to keep coming back to see what comes next. And if you want Chef Suzuki's omakase sushi, he will be down the hall at the ten-seat Satsuki, where you get to see the master still in action.



Every bite of food has a story to tell — chef Takashi Yanai will embrace the dining experience.



If this picture of Japanese beef doesn't get your mouth watering, you should go back to a picnic.



Suzuki 100 seat dining room captures the essence of the lively atmosphere and thoughtful flavors of the food.

Mew Men

17 Canal St., 2nd fl. (at 4th & Bowling St.) New York, NY 10004
 Tel: 212/337-8860 | www.mewmen.com
 Tue-Thu & Sun: 12:30pm-8:00pm, Fri & Sat: 12:30pm-9:00pm

With hard-to-please and forward-looking crowds, Greenwich Village has long been an incubator for cool and innovative restaurants. To be successful here, a restaurant needs to have a solid concept, great food, and satisfying service. Mew Men, an offshoot ramen house of Tokyo's Mew, has it all. They offer a variety of ramen flavors to appeal to every ramen fan, but what's coherent and important here is its ingredient-oriented philosophy. This is not only far taste but also for food traceability and desire for safe-to-eat food. Take their signature *Shoyu-Chicken* as an example. Noodles are house-origin and its clear soup is made from chicken, freshly delivered from a contract farm daily, and a blend of three types of soy sauce from Japan, all of which were hand-selected by Mew Men's consulting chef. The ramen is topped with two chicken and pork chashu, both are cooked with a sous-vide method for extra tenderness. If you like milky soup, go for salt-flavored *Shio-Fish* or spicy *Ten Tantan*. Also, *Maggie-Tantan* featuring sesame paste and soybean has enough body to attract non-vegetarian fans. And remember that it is a ramen restaurant of the popular ukiyaya, so you should taste their well-crafted side dishes that go well with any ramen.



Enjoy the well-balanced, multi-layered flavor of our soup as the clear chicken broth base. *Shoyu-Chicken*. With milky soup *Shio-Fish*, exhibits a complexity of different side of chicken broth.



Japanese style beef chicken. *Kara Age* is finished with an addition of corn flakes to the better tend served with *Chashu*-style meat sauce.



It's all about the Mew Men's menu. The holy trinity of meat (chicken, beef, and lamb) corresponds to the essence of ramen (chicken, beef, and lamb).

3 Best Sellers

- 10-course Kaiseki
- Chef Suzuki Omakase Sushi (at Satsuki)
- Vegetarian Kaiseki

\$150
 \$150
 \$70

3 Best Sellers

- *Shoyu-Chicken*
- *Ten Tantan*
- *Kara Age*

\$13
 \$14
 \$8 (Spc) \$8 (Spc)



Japanese Restaurant Guide

\$\$\$ Average price for a three-course dinner for two people in midtown

- Table for 2 available
- Open for lunch
- Car Wash
- Delivery
- Party Dining
- Wine Dining
- Laptop Friendly
- Smoking Allowed
- Smoking Prohibited

* Check city NY website for up-to-date

Upper West

Upper West GDI GDI CURRENCY

They serve Japanese food only and have well-stocked menu with your choice of toppings. It did seem boring, but it was good. I got to try the GDI GDI Curry. It was very good. New York's best Japanese food is here.

100 W 10th St (bet 9th & 10th St) **\$10-15**

475-623-1140 www.gdigdi.com

Upper West Amami Fusion & Lounge

100 W 10th St (bet 9th & 10th St) **\$10-15**

212-675-1000

Upper West Ichibu Restaurant

100 W 10th St (bet 9th & 10th St) **\$10-15**

212-675-1000

Upper West Jia-Ramen*

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Upper West Jia-Ramen*

400 Broadway Ave (bet 10th & 11th St) **\$10-15**

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Upper West Nabe Nabe*

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Upper West Norito Ramen

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Upper West Rai Ramen*

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Upper West RABU

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Upper West Vasa Sasho & Sasho*

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Upper East A-Asahi Sasho

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475-623-1140

Upper East CHOCCHIN

100 W 10th St (bet 9th & 10th St) **\$10-15**

475-623-1140

Upper East Dango

100 W 10th St (bet 9th & 10th St) **\$10-15**

475-623-1140

Upper East IRON Sasho*

100 W 10th St (bet 9th & 10th St) **\$10-15**

475-623-1140

Upper East Isakura

100 W 10th St (bet 9th & 10th St) **\$10-15**

475-623-1140

Upper East Kyoto Sasho

100 W 10th St (bet 9th & 10th St) **\$10-15**

475-623-1140

Upper East Monochrome

100 W 10th St (bet 9th & 10th St) **\$10-15**

475-623-1140

Upper East Norito Ramen*

100 W 10th St (bet 9th & 10th St) **\$10-15**

475-623-1140

Upper East Sasho Sasho

100 W 10th St (bet 9th & 10th St) **\$10-15**

475-623-1140

Upper East Shobu Sasho 70*

100 W 10th St (bet 9th & 10th St) **\$10-15**

475-623-1140

Upper East Sasho Sasho*

100 W 10th St (bet 9th & 10th St) **\$10-15**

475-623-1140

Upper East Sasho Sasho*

100 W 10th St (bet 9th & 10th St) **\$10-15**

475-623-1140

Upper East Sasho Sasho*

100 W 10th St (bet 9th & 10th St) **\$10-15**

475-623-1140

Upper East Tawashi Sasho Sasho*

100 W 10th St (bet 9th & 10th St) **\$10-15**

475-623-1140

Upper East YUKA*

100 W 10th St (bet 9th & 10th St) **\$10-15**

475-623-1140

Midtown West

Midtown West GDI GDI CURRENCY*

100 W 10th St (bet 9th & 10th St) **\$10-15**

475-623-1140

Midtown West Sasho Sasho*

100 W 10th St (bet 9th & 10th St) **\$10-15**

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Midtown West Sasho Sasho*

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475-623-1140

Midtown West Yachi Ramen

100 W 10th St (bet 9th & 10th St) **\$10-15**

475-623-1140

Midtown West Yachi Ramen

100 W 10th St (bet 9th & 10th St) **\$10-15**

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Midtown West Yachi Ramen

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NY Times Favourite Uogashi Sushi Moriawase with egg custard, salad and miso soup

\$45

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[Sat]
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Brunch: 10am - 4pm
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with egg custard, salad and miso soup

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A New Izakaya that Celebrates Culinary History



The late Rocky Aoki was a phenomenon in the restaurant industry. This larger-than-life figure started the Benihana restaurant empire in Manhattan, and was one of the most influential figures in popularizing Japanese cuisine throughout the United States. ROKI Le Izakaya, which debuted in February in the Flatiron district, is his wife Keiko Ono Aoki's latest project, an izakaya concept that is dedicated to his memory and pioneering spirit. With fish provided by True World Foods, ROKI's menu is brimming with exciting morsels of food that will redefine the izakaya experience for veterans and newcomers alike.

Spearheaded by Chef Roy Hagiwara, of Hakata Tarean fame, ROKI Le Izakaya is a modernized spin on the izakaya – traditionally associated with small venues, alcoholic drinks, and menus filled with tapas-like dishes. The menu at izakaya Le Roki has elevated every possible aspect of the experience, with dazzlingly creative dishes with spins that range from campers served on "crispy" sushi rice to a Pole Grouse Duck Charu to a selection of original ramen and ramen nabe (hot pot) that is created to do together a night of various dishes and drinks.

Eyes with all the meat and poultry, the fish is just as significant to the concept. Chef Hagiwara has composed a selection of items that include the canapés (Jiro, Snow Crab, Foie, Sweet Shrimp, Tuna, among others), the Chef's Sashimi Platter (available in three sizes), and the sushi rolls. The umami-rich Konpachi Copacabana is a true standout, presented on a plate that rests on top of a bowl of shaved ice. The Fresh Uni and Seared Scallops are another standout balancing young, sweet scallops with the essence of the sea offered by the creamy sea urchins. But the chef is at his most playful with the Abalone – seared and presented in its shell – which is then delivered on top of an iron tea pot that is overflowing with smoke (courtesy of dry ice).

According to Chef Hagiwara, high quality fish is essential, especially for dishes that have such floridness, to make them shine both in presentation and flavor. "That's why I have been using True World Foods for my career in New York City and they are my sole fish provider for ROKI Le Izakaya," he added. "They have everything I need, whether it is local or from Japan, and they always deliver on their promises. I wouldn't rely on anyone else."



On the left the Abalone (top left) and Konpachi (above) are both cooked on a hot iron pot and served with rice.



The Fresh Uni and Seared Scallops bring together two of the most delicious flavors of the sea. Served on a steel stander it is as hot as it is crispy.



Chef Hagiwara decorates that big smile. The spirit of izakaya is a special feel that is irreplaceable.

ROKI Le Izakaya
12 W 2nd St., New York, NY 10011
TEL: 866-353-7634 | www.rockizakaya.com



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* Chapsticks NY available to pick up

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200 Montross Ave. White Plains, NY 10610 914-262-5281	\$25 (L) \$35 (D)
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New Jersey	Kanase*
200 Montross Ave. White Plains, NY 10610 914-262-5281	\$25 (L) \$35 (D)
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New Jersey	Kanagata Sash*
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100 W. 4th St. New York, NY 10013 212-477-2822	\$25 (L) \$35 (D)
Midtown West	Cafe Zaiya Midtown W.
100 W. 4th St. New York, NY 10013 212-477-2822	\$25 (L) \$35 (D)
Midtown East	Beard Cafe
100 W. 4th St. New York, NY 10013 212-477-2822	\$25 (L) \$35 (D)
Midtown East	Boca Visual New York
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Midtown East	Cafe Zaiya Midtown E.
100 W. 4th St. New York, NY 10013 212-477-2822	\$25 (L) \$35 (D)
Midtown East	IPPODO TEA
100 W. 4th St. New York, NY 10013 212-477-2822	\$25 (L) \$35 (D)
Midtown East	Musomoto Kebab
100 W. 4th St. New York, NY 10013 212-477-2822	\$25 (L) \$35 (D)



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Mixology Lab

The sun is getting brighter and stronger and tempting us to enjoy that thirst-quenching drink. For this coming sunny season, Miss Sake USA 2016, Jessica Joly, has created a refreshing and uplifting sake cocktail.

Ninki Ichi Sparkling Sake "Natural" Junmai Ginjo

Category: Junmai Ginjo, Sparkling **Rice milling rate:** 65%

Origin of production: Fukusaka Prefecture

Alcohol content: 7%

Features: This sparkling sake is brewed with only rice, rice koji and water, and made through the Champagne-style, in-bottle fermentation method that creates delicate bubbles. The elegant carbonation is captured in the bottle until you open it, allowing you to enjoy a flash of effervescence. With low alcohol content, it's light and slightly sweet on the palate.

Imported by Silkroad Wine & Spirits, Inc.
www.silkroadwinesandspirits.com

Sparkling Sake Spritzer

Cocktail recipe courtesy of Jessica Joly, Miss Sake USA 2016

Certified sake sommelier and the winner of the MISS SAKÉ USA Contest in 2016, Jessica Joly, is passionate about promoting the beauty of sake in the U.S. She created a sake cocktail that appeals to a wider audience by featuring Ninki Ichi Sparkling Sake with a little help of blood orange. With a beautiful red-like color and elegant perlage, the cocktail boasts a citrusy note and subtle sweetness from the rice at the end. "Ninki-ichi Sparkling is light and refreshing, and I made the cocktail particularly approachable for ladies. It definitely attracts those who love Prosecco and Bellini," says Jessica.

Ingredients: Serves 1

Q 4 oz Ninki Ichi Sparkling "Natural" Junmai Ginjo

Q 1 oz blood orange (or) lemonade (1 tbsp simple syrup, 1/2 lemon, 1/2 Sanjust blood orange)

Directions:

1. Make blood orange (or) lemonade by mixing a small tablespoon of simple syrup, lemon juice and blood orange juice.

2. Pour the blood orange lemonade in a glass and gently pour Ninki Ichi Sparkling over it.

3. Garnish with lime/lemon slice and a wedge of blood orange. (Optional)



Ninki, Inc.



Established in Fukusaka Prefecture in 1897, the brewery has dedicated themselves to brewing only gyo and daigyo sake using traditional methods. While they value tradition, they also keep up with trends and modern concepts, presenting their products with modern design and style. The word "ninki" translates into "popularity," but the brewery credits for it to mean "a person (we) who makes sake using their true spirit (sai)." Their brand name "Ninki-ichi" also signifies the brewery aims to be the number one (ichi) sake.

430 Kamata 3-chome, Fukusaka
JAPAN 664-0017
TEL: +81 24389-2991 | www.ninki.jp

Sake Bar Ippudo NY



Sake Bar Ippudo NY is tucked inside Ippudo Westside, the holy grail place in Midtown. Created by Chuska Nakawa Helzer, founder of Sake Odessa, the bar's sole intention is a handful of well-crafted for the locals crowd. Carrying 16-12 sakes that seasonally change and excellent bar foods, it is more than a bar for those waiting for a table, but a destination bar for sake fans.

325 W 51st St., 3rd Fl. 8-9th Ave.
New York, NY 10019
TEL: 212-514-2509
www.ippudony.com

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Healthy, Hearty Cooking

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Featured
ingredient

Kale

Super food, kale, is now a staple vegetable in every household. There are many recipes available, but not so many in Japanese cooking. Try these two inventive dishes shared by Japanese chefs!



Kale Okonomiyaki

By Hiroko Liston

Ingredients Serves 2-3

- 100-150 g kale leaves, thinly sliced. Note: Add as many kale leaves as you like as long as you've combined them with batter. □ 1 onion, shredded or sliced to thin strips. □ 1 cup all purpose flour or 50% flour. □ 1 cup water. □ 2 eggs. □ 1 pinch salt. □ 1/4 tsp dashi powder. *optional □ 100 g thinly sliced pork belly. □ Okonomiyaki Sauce to taste. □ Japanese mayonnaise to taste. □ Kamaobachi (Santo fukuro). *optional □ Aonori (dried green laver). *optional □ Dashi shoga (dried pickled ginger). *optional

Directions:

1. Mix the batter by mixing flour, water, eggs, salt and dashi powder.
2. Add thinly sliced kale leaves and cook to the bottom and sides.
3. Oil a barbecue grillplate or a frying pan and cook pork (or pork sides).
4. Pour the kale batter mixture over the pork pieces to form pancakes. When the edge of the pancake has set, flip it over and let it be another 2 or 3 minutes, or until the batter has cooked through. You may turn the pancakes over a few times while cooking.
5. Place the pancake on a plate with the pork on the top. Dress with okonomiyaki sauce and Japanese mayonnaise, and garnish with kamaobachi and aonori. Dashi shoga goes well with this as a topping.

www.cookpad.com/uk/recipe/1547808



Hiroko Liston

Hiroko is a former school teacher who lives in Melbourne, Australia. She started re-creating recipes to feed her 10 children. Now she shares them with everyone on her two websites brookdale.co.uk and cookpad.



Miso Soup with Kale

By Yuki in Osaka Kitchen

Ingredients Serves 2

- 1/2 kale leaf
- 2 eggs
- 500 ml water
- 1 gyoza (kamaobachi (Santo fukuro))
- 2 tbsp miso

Directions:

1. Put kamaobachi into a pot with water and heat 5 min, in microwave. Set aside the Santo fukuro and pour only the soup into the pot. (Can be replaced with instant soup stock if available.)
2. Shred kale
3. Heat soup in a pot, and dissolve half the miso into the soup.
4. Break egg on a plate, and gently add it into the soup. Simmer. It will the yolk become to your preference.
5. Add kale into the soup. Turn off the heat immediately to prevent kale discoloration.
6. Add the rest of miso.
7. Re-assemble!

www.cookpad.com/uk/recipe/1535527



Yuki in Osaka Kitchen

As a cooking minister of Osaka Kitchen, Yuki has welcomed more than 270 customers in Osaka, the food capital of Japan. Misaki. May cooking be with you!



Cookpad is the largest recipe sharing service in the world. Over 2.5 million user recipes have been posted on Cookpad in 40+ and 50 million content visits the site each month in Japan. Since 2014, Cookpad has expanded internationally and now operates in over 17 languages, 10 countries, and sites in 40+ million users for local markets of Japan.



Grocery & Sake Guide

The following is a list of stores where you can buy Japanese food and liquor.
 ▲ Chopticks NY was able to pick up

GROCERY

NOMI Way & 11th		
205 Broadway St. 9th & 11th St.	Japanese	
213-256-4035		
Onsen Midtown West*		
36 W 42nd St. 34th & 42nd Ave	Japanese	
212-333-6225		
Onsen Midtown East*		
20 E 42nd St. 34th & 42nd Ave	Japanese	
212-333-6225		
Katsugi & Co. Inc.*		
20 E 42nd St. 34th & 42nd Ave	Japanese	
212-333-6225		
NIRGALA*		
112nd Ave. 34th St. & 112nd Ave	Japanese	
212-333-6225		
Gourmet Meat Markets*		
112 4th St. 34th & 42nd Ave	Japanese	
212-333-6225		
TAMAYA*		
20 E 42nd St. 34th & 42nd Ave	Japanese	
212-333-6225		
Midtown New Ave Market		
20 E 42nd St. 34th & 42nd Ave	Japanese	
212-333-6225		
Wooning		
112 4th St. 34th & 42nd Ave	Japanese	
212-333-6225		
Onsen Greenwood Village*		
112 4th St. 34th & 42nd Ave	Japanese	
212-333-6225		
Japan Premium Food		
112 4th St. 34th & 42nd Ave	Japanese	
212-333-6225		
NOMI E Village		
112 4th St. 34th & 42nd Ave	Japanese	
212-333-6225		
Savory Meat Asian Pl.		
112 4th St. 34th & 42nd Ave	Japanese	
212-333-6225		
Pinar Kras Meat, LLC.*		
112 4th St. 34th & 42nd Ave	Japanese	
212-333-6225		
Hi Japanese Delicacies		
112 4th St. 34th & 42nd Ave	Japanese	
212-333-6225		
Resetta Winers*		
112 4th St. 34th & 42nd Ave	Other	
212-333-6225		
Tokyo Mart*		
112 4th St. 34th & 42nd Ave	Japanese	
212-333-6225		
Savory Meat Sake*		
112 4th St. 34th & 42nd Ave	Japanese	
212-333-6225		
Midtown*		
112 4th St. 34th & 42nd Ave	Japanese	
212-333-6225		

Fremly Market*		
20 W Broadway Ave. 9th & 11th St.	Japanese	
212-333-6225		
H & Y Marketplace		
20 W Broadway Ave. 9th & 11th St.	Japanese	
212-333-6225		
H Mart Northeast TN		
1840 Broadway Ave. 9th & 11th St.	Japanese	
212-333-6225		
H Mart Northeast Blvd.		
1840 Broadway Ave. 9th & 11th St.	Japanese	
212-333-6225		
H Mart Union		
1840 Broadway Ave. 9th & 11th St.	Japanese	
212-333-6225		
H Mart Whitehouse Park*		
1840 Broadway Ave. 9th & 11th St.	Japanese	
212-333-6225		
H Mart Woodside		
1840 Broadway Ave. 9th & 11th St.	Japanese	
212-333-6225		
Sakura-yo*		
1840 Broadway Ave. 9th & 11th St.	Japanese	
212-333-6225		
Waga Itochi*		
1840 Broadway Ave. 9th & 11th St.	Japanese	
212-333-6225		
H Mart Great Neck*		
1840 Broadway Ave. 9th & 11th St.	Japanese	
212-333-6225		
New Japanese Foods*		
1840 Broadway Ave. 9th & 11th St.	Japanese	
212-333-6225		
Shin Nippon On*		
1840 Broadway Ave. 9th & 11th St.	Japanese	
212-333-6225		
DAISO		
1840 Broadway Ave. 9th & 11th St.	Japanese	
212-333-6225		
Pop Mart Scandinavia*		
1840 Broadway Ave. 9th & 11th St.	Japanese	
212-333-6225		
H Mart Hartsdale*		
1840 Broadway Ave. 9th & 11th St.	Japanese	
212-333-6225		
Kana Sake Foods*		
1840 Broadway Ave. 9th & 11th St.	Japanese	
212-333-6225		
NIRGALA Market*		
1840 Broadway Ave. 9th & 11th St.	Japanese	
212-333-6225		
Distributors*		
1840 Broadway Ave. 9th & 11th St.	Japanese	
212-333-6225		
Asian Market		
1840 Broadway Ave. 9th & 11th St.	Other	
212-333-6225		
Packing Bins		
1840 Broadway Ave. 9th & 11th St.	Japanese	
212-333-6225		
Food Boxes		
1840 Broadway Ave. 9th & 11th St.	Japanese	
212-333-6225		
H & Y Marketplace		
1840 Broadway Ave. 9th & 11th St.	Japanese	
212-333-6225		

H & Y Marketplace		
1840 Broadway Ave. 9th & 11th St.	Japanese	
212-333-6225		
H Mart Cherry Hill		
1840 Broadway Ave. 9th & 11th St.	Japanese	
212-333-6225		
H Mart Englewood		
1840 Broadway Ave. 9th & 11th St.	Japanese	
212-333-6225		
H Mart Little Ferry		
1840 Broadway Ave. 9th & 11th St.	Japanese	
212-333-6225		
H Mart Ridgefield		
1840 Broadway Ave. 9th & 11th St.	Japanese	
212-333-6225		
Hwa Nam Chan*		
1840 Broadway Ave. 9th & 11th St.	Japanese	
212-333-6225		
J-MART		
1840 Broadway Ave. 9th & 11th St.	Japanese	
212-333-6225		
Mitsuo Marketplace*		
1840 Broadway Ave. 9th & 11th St.	Japanese	
212-333-6225		
Redwood Fisheries		
1840 Broadway Ave. 9th & 11th St.	Japanese	
212-333-6225		
Fiji Mart Connecticut*		
1840 Broadway Ave. 9th & 11th St.	Japanese	
212-333-6225		
Million Asian Market		
1840 Broadway Ave. 9th & 11th St.	Other	
212-333-6225		
Miyagi*		
1840 Broadway Ave. 9th & 11th St.	Japanese	
212-333-6225		
Tokyo Japanese Store		
1840 Broadway Ave. 9th & 11th St.	Japanese	
212-333-6225		
SAKE		
1840 Broadway Ave. 9th & 11th St.	Japanese	
212-333-6225		
Gourmet Wines & Liquors*		
1840 Broadway Ave. 9th & 11th St.	Sake/Beer	
212-333-6225		
Nagay Wine's		
1840 Broadway Ave. 9th & 11th St.	Sake/Beer	
212-333-6225		
Gourmet Wines & Liquors*		
1840 Broadway Ave. 9th & 11th St.	Sake/Beer	
212-333-6225		

Master Wright*		
1840 Broadway Ave. 9th & 11th St.	Sake/Beer	
212-333-6225		
Amekatsu Wines & Spirits*		
1840 Broadway Ave. 9th & 11th St.	Sake/Beer	
212-333-6225		
Beckham Liquors		
1840 Broadway Ave. 9th & 11th St.	Sake/Beer	
212-333-6225		
Lewards Wine*		
1840 Broadway Ave. 9th & 11th St.	Sake/Beer	
212-333-6225		
N.Y. Liquor		
1840 Broadway Ave. 9th & 11th St.	Sake/Beer	
212-333-6225		
Union Spirits Wines & Spirits		
1840 Broadway Ave. 9th & 11th St.	Sake/Beer	
212-333-6225		
SAKAWA*		
1840 Broadway Ave. 9th & 11th St.	Sake/Beer	
212-333-6225		
Resetta Winers*		
1840 Broadway Ave. 9th & 11th St.	Sake/Beer	
212-333-6225		
Gourmet Wines & Spirits*		
1840 Broadway Ave. 9th & 11th St.	Sake/Beer	
212-333-6225		
JAPANESE WHOLESALE		
1840 Broadway Ave. 9th & 11th St.	Other	
212-333-6225		
Control Drink U.S.A., Ltd.		
1840 Broadway Ave. 9th & 11th St.	Other	
212-333-6225		
Drum Trading Co., Inc.*		
1840 Broadway Ave. 9th & 11th St.	Other	
212-333-6225		
JTC International Inc.*		
1840 Broadway Ave. 9th & 11th St.	Other	
212-333-6225		
NY Market Trading Inc.		
1840 Broadway Ave. 9th & 11th St.	Other	
212-333-6225		
PMAI		
1840 Broadway Ave. 9th & 11th St.	Other	
212-333-6225		
Wine of Japan Import, Inc.		
1840 Broadway Ave. 9th & 11th St.	Other	
212-333-6225		
Wholesale Asian Foods, Inc.		
1840 Broadway Ave. 9th & 11th St.	Other	
212-333-6225		



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Japanese CROSSWORD



Across

1. A traditional Japanese inn equipped with tatami mats is called a _____.
 5. Dictionary form of a verb meaning "to ride."
 8. I-adjective meaning "sleazy."
 9. ____-kei means "baroque" or "party." It consists of two karyō characters ____ (baroque) and kei (gathering).
 16. "Cow," "ok," and "bull" are all called _____ in Japanese.
 12. Missing "supplement" and "assistent," _____ is usually combined with other words to produce a specific meaning, such as ____-katsu (substantive) or ____-go (profundishment).
 13. _____ is the dictionary form of a verb meaning "to bell" and "to simmer," and simmered dishes are called _____ in Japanese.

14. The karyō _____ means "to advance," and it's used in words like ____-kei (evolution), ____-katsu (achievement), and ____-go (progress).

Downs

2. "Night" in Japanese.
 3. Literally meaning "starry mountain," _____ yama in Kyoto is a popular destination for fall foliage.
 4. Japan was formed by volcanic activity, and it is home to many _____ (hot springs).
 6. _____ refers to both Japanese lacquerware and the tree that produces the lacquer.
 7. I-adjective describing a feeling of dizziness.
 11. _____ means "book" on its own, but it's also a part of words such as e-_____ (picture book) and iyaka-_____ (script).



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School Guide

The following is a list of schools where you can learn Japanese culture.
 • Click on the link to visit the school's website.

LANGUAGE

Midtown West: The Nippon Center Japanese Institute NY

The Nippon Center Japanese Institute is a non-profit organization that provides Japanese language instruction for adults and children. The institute offers a variety of courses, including Japanese language, culture, and history. The institute is located in Midtown West, New York City.

100 W. 30th St. (at 7th St.) New York, NY 10001
 (212) 693-1234
www.nipponcenter.org

Midtown East: Nishi Learning

Nishi Learning is a private Japanese language school located in Midtown East, New York City. The school offers a variety of courses, including Japanese language, culture, and history. The school is located in Midtown East, New York City.

100 W. 30th St. (at 7th St.) New York, NY 10001
 (212) 693-1234
www.nishilearning.com

Midtown East: New Academy of New York

The New Academy of New York is a private Japanese language school located in Midtown East, New York City. The school offers a variety of courses, including Japanese language, culture, and history. The school is located in Midtown East, New York City.

100 W. 30th St. (at 7th St.) New York, NY 10001
 (212) 693-1234
www.newacademyofny.com

Midtown East: Japanese Study Institute NY

The Japanese Study Institute NY is a private Japanese language school located in Midtown East, New York City. The school offers a variety of courses, including Japanese language, culture, and history. The school is located in Midtown East, New York City.

100 W. 30th St. (at 7th St.) New York, NY 10001
 (212) 693-1234
www.japanesestudyinstitute.com

Midtown East: Japanese Academy

The Japanese Academy is a private Japanese language school located in Midtown East, New York City. The school offers a variety of courses, including Japanese language, culture, and history. The school is located in Midtown East, New York City.

100 W. 30th St. (at 7th St.) New York, NY 10001
 (212) 693-1234
www.japaneseacademy.com

Midtown East: Japanese/ICU Foundation

The Japanese/ICU Foundation is a private Japanese language school located in Midtown East, New York City. The school offers a variety of courses, including Japanese language, culture, and history. The school is located in Midtown East, New York City.

100 W. 30th St. (at 7th St.) New York, NY 10001
 (212) 693-1234
www.japaneseicu.com

Midtown East: Year True Self

The Year True Self is a private Japanese language school located in Midtown East, New York City. The school offers a variety of courses, including Japanese language, culture, and history. The school is located in Midtown East, New York City.

100 W. 30th St. (at 7th St.) New York, NY 10001
 (212) 693-1234
www.yearlytrueself.com

Midtown East: Nishi Language Institute NY

The Nishi Language Institute NY is a private Japanese language school located in Midtown East, New York City. The school offers a variety of courses, including Japanese language, culture, and history. The school is located in Midtown East, New York City.

100 W. 30th St. (at 7th St.) New York, NY 10001
 (212) 693-1234
www.nishilanguage.com

Midtown East: Nishi Language Institute NY

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100 W. 30th St. (at 7th St.) New York, NY 10001
 (212) 693-1234
www.nishilanguage.com

Midtown East: Language House

100 W. 30th St. (at 7th St.) New York, NY 10001
 (212) 693-1234
www.languagehouse.com

Midtown East: PC Book

100 W. 30th St. (at 7th St.) New York, NY 10001
 (212) 693-1234
www.pcbook.com

Midtown East: Remnant New York

100 W. 30th St. (at 7th St.) New York, NY 10001
 (212) 693-1234
www.remnantny.com

Midtown East: ARE Language Exchange NY

100 W. 30th St. (at 7th St.) New York, NY 10001
 (212) 693-1234
www.arelanguagexchange.com

Midtown East: Teal

100 W. 30th St. (at 7th St.) New York, NY 10001
 (212) 693-1234
www.teal.com

Midtown East: NYU-SCPS

100 W. 30th St. (at 7th St.) New York, NY 10001
 (212) 693-1234
www.nyu-scps.com

Midtown East: Nishi Language

100 W. 30th St. (at 7th St.) New York, NY 10001
 (212) 693-1234
www.nishilanguage.com

Midtown East: Long Island Japanese

100 W. 30th St. (at 7th St.) New York, NY 10001
 (212) 693-1234
www.longislandjapanese.com

Midtown East: Long Island Japanese Culture Center

100 W. 30th St. (at 7th St.) New York, NY 10001
 (212) 693-1234
www.longislandjapanese.com

Midtown East: Nishi Academy

100 W. 30th St. (at 7th St.) New York, NY 10001
 (212) 693-1234
www.nishiacademy.com

Midtown East: Nishi Academy

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www.nishiacademy.com

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 (212) 693-1234
www.nishiacademy.com

Nuka-zuke: The Pickle that Keeps Giving



Every country with a strong drinking culture offers some sort of pickle. The crisp acidity that comes from a pickled vegetable—whether it is a cucumber or cabbage, awakens the palate and pairs well with everything from beer to sake. In Japan, *tsukemono* (pickles) are ubiquitous, but none may be as unique as *nuka-zuke*, which are pickles that are fermented in a deep mixture of rice bran (the hard outer shell of rice), salt, and water. Probiotic and packed with more Vitamin B1 and minerals than typical vegetables, *nuka-zuke* is also as healthy for you as it is delicious.

At Asahi, the izakaya on the Lower East Side's Clinton Street, Chef Kazuo Moto makes his *nuka-zuke* from scratch (as well as their sister restaurant Yappies). As he explained, *nuka-zuke* is different from typical methods of pickling, which usually involves salt, vinegar, sugar, or a combination. With *nuka-zuke*, there is a lot more time spent on the pickling medium, a mash of rice bran, water, and salt called *nuka-doko*. Once mixed together, the *nuka-doko* is then allowed to ferment in a cool, dark environment, while being massaged with vegetable peels and roots (that would otherwise be discarded) in order to fuel the production of lactic acid.

Chef Moto presented a sample of his *nuka-doko*,

and it is as you might imagine with anything fermented, the scent has a strong, distinct funk to it. At first sight, it looks like mud. To the touch, however, the consistency is almost like wet sand—delicate, not overly sticky and warm. The chef revealed that this particular batch was about a year old, maintained with daily mixing by hand in order to aerate it, keep the cultures active, and avoid the growth of mold. When successfully maintained, a good *nuka-doko* can last for years.

The vegetables Chef Moto uses for *nuka-zuke* (he prefers Asian cucumbers, carrots, daikon, and radishes) are completely buried under the surface of the mixture for one to two days. When you pull them out, you can immediately feel how they are lighter and more pliable. But how do they taste? As intuitive as the *nuka-doko* is to the nose, *nuka-zuke* pickles are actually quite mellow—crisp, delicious, and without any overpowering notes. And when you consider that it is actually helping your digestive system, you won't hesitate ordering just one more drink.

— Reported by Nobu Nakashima

Asahi
41 Clinton St., (bet. Broadway & Stanton St.)
New York, NY 10003
Tel.: (212) 333-3399 | www.asahinyc.com



Though mild, the mixture is a sort of sensory flood with textures and textures that aid the digestive system.



Chef Moto going hands-on with his *nuka-doko*, which he has painstakingly cultivated from scratch.



This piece of daikon has been in for about a day and you can already feel the difference in texture.



Nuka-zuke requires a delicate touch. Carefully push vegetables in until they disappear in *nuka* but they also float, and keep them from touching.



The resulting pickles are indeed unorthodox measures of detoxification.

Beauty & Health Tricks

VOL.2: HOMEMADE, NATURAL LIP MASK

While treating clientele at her Meadows spa that attracts celebrity customers, master aesthetician Shruska Bernstein, also explores natural ways to keep skin beautiful. She has a number of natural skincare recipes and this time, she shares one for your lips.

Whether you apply shiny lip gloss or matte rouge, you need to have healthy, smooth lips to look good. There are many lip care products available, but you can actually make your own by using ingredients from your pantry. What you need are just honey and sugar. Mix one teaspoon of honey and another teaspoon of sugar well. Apply the mixture onto your lips and massage with a circular motion. Make sure you don't rub your lip with strong pressure otherwise you might irritate your delicate lip skin. After massaging lightly, rinse off the mask. Honey's vitamin B6 and B2 can help skin recover from damage, and sugar has a function to remove old keratin. So, the mask can smooth out and nourish lips. "After rinsing off the mask, apply lip balm before lips completely dry out and seal the moisturizing and nourishing components in the lip skin," says Shruska. And she advises to repeat it once every 1-2 week(s) to achieve healthy lips radiant from inside.



Mix honey and sugar with care to create the natural lip care mask.



The sweet scent from the honey and sugar gives a pleasant feeling, which is important for beauty care. Just hold your breath to think.



Shruska Bernstein is a master aesthetician and owner of Shruska New York Day Spa. She is known for her facial technique, nicknamed as the Best Facial in New York Magazine. She is a specialist in all facial treatments, skin care and hair removal.
Shruska New York Day Spa 7 St. St. St. (Just Nth 8 Sts. East) 10th Fl., New York, NY 10011
TEL: 212 644-1400 | www.shruska.com

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JAPANESE SUB-CULTURE WATCH

The Top Tastiest Japanese Festival Snacks

By Jessica Furutaro

Japanese summers might be oppressively hot, but that doesn't stop thousands of people from flocking to the summer festivals each year. There's nothing better than strolling among the paper lanterns, taking in the sights, and, more importantly the food! Here are some of our top festival food picks.



10. Choco Banana

Beniwa and chocolate are a perfect match. Choco Beniwa, essentially frozen, chocolate-covered bananas, are one cool way to beat the hot summer heat. They come in a number of varieties, from plain chocolate to more decadent versions covered in colorful sprinkles.

9. Yaki Tomorokoshi

Yaki tomorokoshi takes corn-on-the-cob to the next level. The corn is boiled until tender before it's laid on the grill and smothered in a sweet and salty soy glaze. This gives the corn an irresistible, caramelized luster.

8. Kakigori

Shaved ice, or kakigori, comes in all of your favorite flavors and offers sweet relief! When you're sweating in your yukata, kakigori is made of larger ice flakes than shaved ice in the West, giving it a light texture. You can sometimes find it served with condensed milk, for added sweetness.



7. Shioyaki

These soy-salt basted, roasted or pan-cooked are a signature sign of summer. They're lightly coated in sea salt, which pairs perfectly with their smoky flavor. The fish is flaky and soft and can be eaten right off the stick.

6. Hashimaki

If you didn't think okonomiyaki could be improved, think again. Hashimaki is essentially a variety of the famous savory pancake wrapped around a pair of chopsticks. It's then topped with mayonnaise, okonomiyaki sauce, spring onions, aonori (powdered seaweed flakes), and sometimes even a fried egg. Its portability makes this a perfect festival snack.

5. Ikayaki

Ikayaki, or grilled squid, is a Japanese street-food classic. Grilled on a stick, ikayaki is served up plain or coated in a tasty sauce. The squid is bite and tender, perfect for munching.



4. Karaage

Fried chicken, or karaage, is almost as much of a Japanese staple as sushi. It's always a good time for karaage, but it's even better at festivals where you can pick up a bucket of freshly fried chicken bites on the cheap. They come plain or coated with salt or other flavored spices.

3. Taiyaki

Taiyaki are super cute, teardrop-shaped fish-shaped pastries grilled in a mold. Tai is the Japanese word for sea bream, which explains their adorable sea-bird shape. The crispy grilled outside gives way to an airy pastry casing filled with either red bean, anko-jam or cream. In recent years, yatai (food cart) vendors have made variations of this sugary favorite, including taiyaki paraballs filled with ice cream and Pocky sticks.

2. Yakisoba

This savory treat is pure, delicious simplicity. Soba noodles are grilled with chopped cabbage and pork, before they're stirred up with yakisoba sauce. The yakisoba then served with aonori, pickled ginger, and sometimes topped with a dash of mayo.



1. Takoyaki

Takoyaki might just be the ultimate Japanese street food. These little dough balls are filled with pieces of plump octopuses. They're then coated with a generous layer of sweet but salty takoyaki sauce and a drizzle of mayonnaise. A dash of aonori and some dried fish flakes, or katsuobushi, complete these dumplings of deliciousness.

Images courtesy of Aki About Us at www.aikidomedia.com/kyoto/kyoto.html

MONO-logue

"Mono" means "thing," "object," or "product" in Japanese, but it also implies that the thing has quality. In this corner, we introduce "mono" that characterize Japan's spirit of constant quality improvement.

Vol. 70 - MONO of the month

Shiseido White Lucent Series

People all over the world cover glowing, radiant skin, and in Japan especially, people have been on the verge of obsession when it comes to covering dark spots and giving the skin a lighter, more even look. So it's no wonder that Japanese skin care companies have worked tirelessly to create effective solutions, and at the forefront of this quest is the brand, Shiseido—established in Japan in 1872 as a Western-style pharmacy and today, perhaps one of the best-known cosmetics companies in the world. The latest additions to its **White Lucent** line of skin correcting products with SPF protection are just another shining example of the company's tradition of innovation, offering a solution for pesky dark spots.

Summertime is an especially risky period for people, as dark spots are created when UV rays increase melanin production, skin turnover is less than optimal, and subsequently excessive melanin gets trapped under the skin. Shiseido's **White Lucent All-Weather Spot Correcting Serum Broad Spectrum SPF 25** with PRO-ArgenceX2 Technology specifically targets dark spots and even them out, as well as helps to reset new ones. The serum contains Spot-Fixing Technology, tiny capsules filled with brightening ingredients that reduce spots and assist with one's usual foundation to even out skin tone. In comparison, the SPF protects spots from rising but more UV rays. When it comes to direct targeting, this is the ideal solution for those already struggling with covering up spots. This multi-function product comes in three colors, Natural Light, Natural, and Medium.

For others who are seeking out a more general moisturizer the **White Lucent All-Weather Brightener Broad Spectrum SPF 23** is an

excellent choice. This not only includes spot treating technology, but also acts as a daily moisturizer that makes your skin brighter as the day goes on. This is accomplished through the use of Tuned Delivery Bright Technology, whose brightening capsules break open throughout the day delivering Multi-Target Vitamin C (a brightening agent) as well as a variety of aminoacids (Vitamins C & E) to amplify the effects. A light-transformation powder also reacts to UV rays and releases a fluorescent light that adds an extra glow.

When using the corrector and moisturizer together, apply the correcting serum to trouble spots after putting on foundation and makeup, and blending into the areas through gentle tapping. Then apply two pairs of eye drops of the moisturizer all over the face to finish. Both products also contain a variety of enhancements, including Spot Block Complex, a mix of Polysaccharide-Chinese Extract and Peony Root Extract, which also fight dark spots, and Super Hydro-Synergy Complex, which helps keep skin stay hydrated. Shiseido's patented AMSC brightening ingredient also helps separate the White Lucent line from its competitors.

Daily attention to your skin, especially when you are spending more time outdoors, will be crucial—not just to cover up your spots now, but also to protect your skin in the future. So what are you waiting for? Whoever you are and whatever you are doing, knowing that your skin looks best will be comforting, satisfying and a real confidence boost.



The entire lineup of White Lucent products includes cleansing foams and even a nighttime moisturizer—ideal solutions for every part of your day.



Three shades of the product are shown: Natural Light, Natural, and Medium.

The spot corrector works in three different skin tones, and is so easy to apply it is to keep with you for any necessary touch-ups.

The SPF protection and all-day brightening may make you feel like a glowing gem in every shade from now.

Info: www.shiseido.com

ASIA

P. 38 Asian Travel



Thailand's Luxury Resorts

Blessed with beautiful nature, tropical weather, rich culture and excellent hospitality, Thailand guarantees more than satisfying travel experiences. From city to mountainside to seashore, introduced here are upscale resort hotels.

P. 40 Asian Restaurant Review



Dawa's

Himalayan and modern American Cuisine restaurant, Dawa's, is truly a unique restaurant that serves American dishes prepared by Nepal-born, Jeen Georges-alum chef and authentic Himalayan cuisine cooked by her father.

P. 41 Listings

Asian Restaurant

BUCKET LIST TRAVEL ASIA: THAILAND'S LUXURY RESORTS

Thailand is evolving. Just a couple of decades ago, the country was a favorite among backpackers who sought out remote adventures in the tropics. While Thailand remains true to itself, it has also developed into a place for discerning international travelers wanting to revel in these minds and bodies in unforgettable settings. This time, with the help of the Tourism Authority of Thailand, we present some of the loveliest resorts that are perfect for rejuvenation.

Urban Bliss in Central Thailand

When seeking a cosmopolitan getaway, Bangkok is the best place to start. Its culture, nightlife, shopping and dining options are endless, and can accommodate all ages and lifestyles. The city is also home to the **137 Pillars Suites & Residences Bangkok** hotel, one of the most notable resort spots in the country. Located west to the shopping district, it offers sweeping views of the skyline and is brimming with modern amenities. The spa and wellness center is perfect for keeping the body prepared for all of the activities you will be pursuing. Located by the river is the **Anantara Riverside Bangkok Resort**, which offers a unique perspective of the city. While still in close proximity to Bangkok's many offerings, this is also its own exclusive sanctuary, with high-end restaurants and bars. Visitors can keep their body in topnotch condition with the fitness center, as well as many spa programs and classes that guide you to better health.

Embracing the Tropics in Northern Thailand

Nature lovers will gravitate towards Northern Thailand, where lush forests are the setting for breathtaking interactions with flora and wildlife. The **Four Seasons Resort Chiang Mai** is an idyllic gateway, offering numerous packages that include activities like elephant watching, bike tours, fitness sessions, and dining experiences created by your own personal chef. The wellness packages are designed to impress even the most seasoned traveler, with a variety of massages, yoga classes, and salon services. Within the city however, no other hotel comes close to the **Shangri-La Hotel Chiang Mai**. It puts you in the middle of the bustling city center, where all of the shopping, dining, and nightlife is at your fingertips. Whatever your exploits, the hotel is the perfect place to relax and recharge with one of the many spa treatments that are centered around the idea of chi—the Chinese philosophy of unblocking the body's natural life force and making sure it is flowing for optimal health.

Ultimate Luxury in Southern Thailand

If you come to Thailand just to be spoiled, few resorts will beat out the eco-friendly **Six Senses Midway Samui** in Koh Samui — perhaps the



country's most beautiful island. Local experts are on hand to massage everything from detoxing to massages and skin treatments. Guests can select accommodations ranging from quiet, climate-controlled rooms to open-air rooms that are immersed in the island's sounds and smells. The ocean surroundings will only further the blissful state of mind you enter. Down the road is the multiple award-winning **Coconut Koh Samui**. This is one of the most renowned resorts, whose spa is brimming with every amenity you can imagine. Visitors push over the facilities and personal service, which are priceless advantages for any luxury getaway. Every element, from the private docks overlooking the Gulf to a state-of-the-art fitness center will keep your mind, body, and soul engaged.

Finding Enlightenment in Eastern Thailand

Where the lush landscape meets the brilliant sea on the island of Koh Kood, the **Sensara Kiri** resort offers an unbeatable environment for those who love nature. Activities range from butterfly watching within the rainforest to diving along the reefs — all arranged by the resort. To balance all that activity, guests can simply kick back on the private beach, enjoy a great meal at one of several impressive restaurants, or take advantage of the many spa packages created to rejuvenate the body. All the private residences and villas come with private pools, and the staff is reputed to be among the most attentive you will ever encounter.

For more information, connect with the Tourism Authority of Thailand (<https://tao.tourismthailand.org/home>)



A view of your private deck and pool in Six Senses, for a more modern sanctuary close to nature.

Amazing Tastes of Thailand

amazing
THAILAND



DTP



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HIMALAYAN PARALLEL WITH NEW AMERICAN DAWA'S

For ethnic food lovers, Sunnyside-Woodside-Jackson Heights in Queens is a golden route to savor authentic fare from every country as well as new variations with NY twists. The SRIU dining scene is particularly exciting today thanks to new restaurants which have sprung up in the past couple of years. One such contribution is Dawa's, which serves Himalayan and modern American cuisines.

Born in Nepal and raised in India, Chef/Co-owner Dawa had worked in several established restaurants in New York and as a personal chef before opening this restaurant. She cooks modern American dishes and her father makes Himalayan ones. So, don't expect a fusion menu, but you can enjoy two completely different cuisines composed seamlessly.

Regardless of cuisine styles, what's important for them is to use fresh, locally sourced ingredients that are grown on environmentally conscious farms. Try Vegetable Momos, a signature item from their Himalayan plate menu. It's a vegetable version of popular Himalayan steamed dumplings made with wrappers containing yu-choi greens and with potato and yu-dho stuffing. Dress it with creamy sauce made with pureed vegetables before digging in. Recommended from the American menu is Butterfist Chicken Sandwich. Crunchy deep-fried, butterfist-marinated chicken is embraced by breadie buns and accompanied by vinegar-based onion and homemade jalapeno jam, stimulating your taste buds from every angle. Rustic yet chic atmosphere is well attuned with their foods, making you feel comfortably lost in Dawa's unique dining universe.



Vegetable momos served with a creamy sauce made with locally sourced and fresh. The green and orange color palette ornaments the plate of nature.



Crispy fried chicken is made with an authentic Himalayan chicken sauce. As you bite into it, the essence from the succulent meat seeps into your mouth.



Everyone naturally feels relaxed in the rustic ambience of Dawa's.

Dawa's
5116 Skillman Ave., Bklyn, Met & 51st Sts | Flushing, NY 11357 | TEL: 718-495-6475 | www.dawasny.com
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Topaz Noodle Bar

171 W. 54th St., (between 7th & 8th Aves.), New York 10019
Tel: 212-645-2777 | www.topaznoodlebar.com
Mon-Sun: 11:30 am-11 pm

Quick service restaurant that is conveniently located in the commercial district near Central Park 5th Ave. and Carnegie Hall. Topaz Noodle Bar offers quality authentic, modern Thai cuisine featuring noodle dishes. Starting in the month of April we've included a new addition to our menu: Dinner Sets. Each of our dinner sets comes with an entree of our choosing, from the six signature entrees that we have available, as well as a Thai Salad and Spring Rolls. Come experience and enjoy our signature dishes like Gassy New Tom Yum, starting at only \$10!






Entertainment Event / Le sure

Exhibition

April 22-May 3 FREE

Flower Artist Yoko Bito's Solo Exhibition

gypsy GALLERY NEW YORK

gypsy GALLERY will host flower artist, Yoko Bito's solo exhibition titled "The quiet swirling of a newness for east". The exhibit's images are in the forest Bito used to play in as a child in Japan. She works with artificial, live and preserved flowers to create decorations for interiors of common city buildings, interiors and art installations. She is also in charge of the interior of the West Village bar scene GARDEN New York.

Location: 434 Greenwich St., 3rd floor, New York, NY 10013
TEL: 646-228-8199 / www.gypsygall.com
Info: www.life.com

May 11-24 FREE

Mitsue Hoshino Textile Exhibition

The Nippon Gallery

The Nippon Gallery will host textile works by dyeing and weaving artist, Mitsue Hoshino exhibiting 78 dyeing and weaving works including 13 kimono. Avoid of wearing 40-year vintage artist Hoshino, minutely dyes the thread in different colors with a technique called Kiseru and finishes the work by weaving the thread by hand using a loom. His works are used in film performances, TV commercials and movies with the reputation of a best style. The Nippon Gallery will also hold a kimono exhibition "Forme/Facet - 5th Show-royal" by Naoki Hosono from May 3-8.

Location: 145 W 57th St., 4th floor, New York, NY 10019
TEL: 212-587-2222 / www.nippongallery.org



May 12-21 FREE

"Glass Half Full" Exhibit

Hatsuda Naoko



Factory Zoomer is a brand of usable glassware that was created by Naoko Tsuji in Kamakura, Japan. His blown glass work will be on display in an exhibit titled "Glass Half Full" during NYC's Design Week from May 12-21. The exhibition will focus on a new limited series of whiskey glasses (available for purchase at Naoko Naoko). The glasses can be purchased throughout the exhibition work and during the opening reception from 7-9 pm. Drinks will be provided.

Location: 2 Expo Place, New York, NY 10001

TEL: 212-239-1938 / www.naokonoko.com

May 12-June 2 FREE

Prin Teri Tera Matsubara's Solo Exhibition "Daydream" Makers



The works of potter Tera Matsubara will be displayed in the solo exhibition "Daydream" at Makers. Matsubara describes his process by saying "When I grow up there was abundant nature and a beautiful story sky. As a child I didn't appreciate it, but now I create while envision-

ing what couldn't be, and places that couldn't be seen." The opening reception will be on the 13th from 5-7 pm and there you can enjoy wagashi from local confectionery Miyuki Hyodo.

Location: 57 2nd Ave., 2nd floor, New York, NY 10002
TEL: 212-695-5805 / www.makersnook.com

Workshop

May 7

Calligraphy Workshop

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May 8

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Happenings

Free MINT Head Spa for the First 3 Customers

Belo New York

located in the heart of the chic Midtown East neighborhood Japanese hair salon Belo New York (obviously) specializes in new hair redesigns and styles to their list of services. For the arrival of spring, they are offering a seasonal service, MINT head spa (Reg. \$30). The spa uses the MINT hair product, which gives a cool sensation and releases your stress while cleansing deep. The first 3 new customers who order hair services can receive the head spa for free. Memento Chicago's NY to receive the offer when making an appointment. Not available in combination with other discount offers.

Location: 239 E. 58th St., (bet. 2nd & 3rd Ave.), New York, NY 10022
TEL: 446-767-6532 / www.belonewyork.com

\$40 Off Shirotsu and Sento Treatments

On-In Center

On-In Center, a Japanese Shirotsu Center, is offering a Spring Japanese A 60 min Shirotsu Treatment by their shirotsu practitioners will be \$60 (Reg. \$100), and a 90 min. Shirotsu/Sento Treatment that includes face diagnosis, 30 min shirotsu by their practitioners and 30 min Sento by master practitioners. Non-Sunday will be \$120 (Reg. \$180). These treatments eliminate pain and stress and increase flexibility in the shoulders, back, neck and legs. The offers are valid until May 31. Friends or relatives may also use this opportunity if mentioned through email while booking an appointment.

Location: 111 E. 138 St., (bet. Lexington & 3rd Ave.), NYC

New York, NY 10035

TEL: 973-447-9134 / www.onincenter.com

\$10 Discount Sasho Spa Treatment

Salon Vija

Salon Vija is offering \$20 off its normally \$30 Sasho Spa Treatment (lime dry included) for the first 10 customers. It was developed by the salon's Beata Matuszewska who is certified by the Japan Head Spa Association. The 25 minute treatment massages your shoulders and neck while using wet steam, detoxifies the scalp with a carbonic acid shampoo and

moisturizes it with a collagen scalp mask. According to Rita, this is different from a regular scalp massage in that it's more of a facial treatment for the scalp. The offer is valid until May 31. Don't let it get to you! Check out Chopticks NY to receive this discount.

Location: 239 E. 58th St., (bet. 2nd Ave.), New York, NY 10022

TEL: 212-644-6444 / www.chopticks.com

\$30 Off Gel & Color

GARDEN NEW YORK

GARDEN NEW YORK is a Japanese hair salon in the West Village with expert stylists who are up to date with the latest hair trends from New York and Tokyo. Each stylist customizes her style to suit the individual needs of each

client. This May, GARDEN NEW YORK is offering a \$30 discount on a combination of haircut (Reg. \$70) and gel or color (Reg. \$50) and ask for all last time customers. Experienced stylists will give advice on choosing the best color for each individual's complexion/hair's texture and lifestyle. The offer is only available on weekdays.

Location: 233 W. 11th St., (bet. Broadway & Washington St.)

New York, NY 10014

TEL: 212-647-9322 / www.garden-ny.com



DEALS OF THE MONTH

Half-Off Massage Treatment Special Spring Campaign

Ido Holistic Center

The Japanese shirotsu massage spa Ido Holistic Center is offering a special spring discount campaign. The 110 minute treatment, which typically goes for \$280 will be provided for only \$98. It is composed of three different treatments which comprehensively relieve dryness, stress, as well as stress and fatigue. The first is the 30-minute herbal dry steam, during which Chinese herbal medicine is used. You will sweat out toxins, and the aromatics help to relax you to relax while your autonomic nervous system adjusts. The 60-minute full body massage will relax your body's tightness and tenderness. (Warm-up or bathes are better results, so do this after

the facial

seamlessly. Finally

the 15 minute

scalp massage

will parties

help improve

eye strain and

stress. Also

can Chopticks NY to receive this offer.

Location: 27 E. 49th St., (bet. Madison & 5th Ave.), 2nd fl.

New York, NY 10017

TEL: 212-699-5086 / www.idocenter.com



10 Free Tickets to If Conference

May 18

Japan NYC Startups/ Japan Society

If Conference 2017 is giving different speakers, motivating leaders and motivated people who are enthusiastic about learning design and social innovation a chance to express their interest in the ways of positively affecting the relationship between Japan and America. This event will encourage cultural immersion while expressing the importance of the going conversation. The meeting will include a keynote presentation by Kate Webber, founding editor of Fast Company Magazine, member of Japan Society's Executive Network and a Japan Society U.S. Japan Leadership Fellow. Other speakers that will be an entrepreneur in Palo Alto, Co-Founder & CEO of Material World and Neuroscience. Founding Partners of Haruoto & Co. This event will



be followed by a reception. Japan NYC Startups will give away 10 tickets to the conference for Chopticks NY readers. To enter the giveaway sweepstakes, email info@conference.com with your name and email address at the body of the message by May 12.

Deadline: 11:59 PM, 5/12/2017 on the date of 4th & 5th

Area: New York, NY 10004

www.ifconference.com

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[Ticket] GA / US\$25 VIP / US\$95 Table / \$100 - \$150
Age Restriction: 6+
[Ticket Sales Information]
General ticket sales for VIP & GA: Now On Sale
avalonhollywood.com/calendar/2017-05

Manhattan, NY Concert
May 28th 2017 Theater: Irving Plaza

[Doors Open for VIP] 4PM [Doors Open for GA] 5PM [Curtain] 6PM
[Ticket] GA / US\$25 VIP / US\$95
Age Restriction: 6+, Under 15 accompanied by an adult (16+)
[Ticket Sales Information]
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venue.irvingplaza.com

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Official Artist Website (JAPANESE) generations-tribe.jp
www.instagram.com/generations_official



US Promoter Website (Japanese & English) www.mts-mnny.com
twitter.com/generationsus



www.facebook.com/GENERATIONS_official

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8AM-10AM

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Soba Noodle Kneading Demonstration
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Introducing Wajigas' Traditional
Japanese Confections



The oldest Japanese grocery store in the U. S. in continuous operation.

KATAGIRI BROTHERS INC. was established in 1907 as the first Japanese grocery store in New York by the two brothers who emigrated from Japan. In the early years, there weren't many Japanese people in New York, so they catered to the local customers with fine imported goods such as coffee and tea in addition to Japanese groceries. They also supplied food and drinks for steamships as a ship chandler and grew their business to host a wide range of products, from groceries to toiletries as well as books and clothes. The store continued to operate throughout the wars, and today Katagiri is cherished by both Japanese locals and New Yorkers as a grocery store that specializes in Japanese food.